

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 5, 6 and 7 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found in the specification at pg. 9, lines 1-6. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-3 and 5-8 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being anticipated by Maeda (JP 10-155087) in combination with Sullivan (U.S. Patent No. 5,070,413). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The abstract of Maeda discloses “[A] noise generating circuit 12 generates an M series random number having a required bit width by using a random number seed as an initial value and converts it by the edge quantity to generate noise. A pseudo contour is made unremarkable by increasing a random number in a smooth image area with a small edge and decreasing a random number in a rugged image area with a large edge quantity in the random number conversion.” According to Maeda, the reason for superimposing noise is for preventing pseudo contour.

In contrast, the claimed invention superimposes the noise to prevent texture noise (see specification pg. 4). Thus, the claimed superimposed noise is Gaussian noise, which is not disclosed by any of the cited references. The independent claims have been amended to clarify this feature. Accordingly, the features of claims 1, 5, 6 and 7 are not disclosed or suggested by Maeda, Sullivan or a combination thereof. Claims 2, 3 and 8 are allowable at least due to their respective dependencies. Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 4 and 9 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maeda in view of Sullivan and Kaburagi (U.S. Patent No. 5,805,738). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 4 and 9 depend from claims which recite superimposing Gaussian noise on the input image. Neither Sullivan, Maeda or Kaburagi teach or suggest this feature. Therefore, these claims are allowable for the reasons set forth above. Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 325772019900.

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